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Letter dated 18 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the Declaration of Barcelona on the Middle East (see annex), issued on 16 March 2002 by the European Council, which met in Barcelona on 15 and 16 March 2002.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Inocencio F. **Arias**
Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 18 March 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

European Council, Barcelona, 15 and 16 March 2002

Declaration of Barcelona on the Middle East

1. The Middle East is in the grip of an extremely grave crisis. The European Union calls on both sides to take immediate and effective action to stop the bloodshed. There is no military solution to this conflict. Peace and security can only be achieved through negotiations.

2. To find a way out of the present situation it is essential to address the security, political and economic aspects as inseparable and interdependent elements of a single process. There is a need to restore a sound political perspective and to implement in parallel political and security measures in a mutually reinforcing way. The European Council warmly welcomes the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 1397 (2002), which reflects the strong commitment of the international community in this regard.

3. This resolution must be urgently implemented, in particular the demand for an immediate cessation of all acts of violence, including all acts of terror, provocation, incitement and destruction; and the call for the Israeli and Palestinian sides and their leaders to cooperate in the implementation of the Tenet work plan and Mitchell report recommendations with the aim of resuming negotiations on a political settlement.

4. The indiscriminate terrorist attacks over the past weeks, killing and injuring innocent civilians, must be condemned. As the legitimate authority, the Palestinian Authority bears the full responsibility for fighting terrorism with all the legitimate means at its disposal. Its capacity to do so must not be weakened. Israel, notwithstanding its right to fight terrorism, must immediately withdraw its military forces from areas placed under the control of the Palestinian Authority, stop extrajudicial executions, lift the closures and restrictions, freeze settlements and respect international law. Both parties must respect international human rights standards. The use of excessive force cannot be justified. The actions against medical and humanitarian institutions and personnel are absolutely unacceptable. They must be able to fully perform their function.

5. Taking note of the decision by the Government of Israel to release Palestinian Authority President Arafat from his confinement in Ramallah, the European Council demands that all remaining restrictions on his freedom of movement be immediately lifted.

6. The European Council welcomes the decision of the United States President to send Special Envoy Zinni back to the region. The European Union, notably through its Special Representative, Ambassador Moratinos is ready to combine its efforts with his, and with those of the Special Envoy of the Russian Federation and the United Nations Special Coordinator.

7. The European Council remains convinced that a third-party monitoring mechanism would help both parties to pursue their efforts to that end and urges them to consider proposals to accept observers. The European Union and the member States are prepared to participate in such a mechanism.

8. The European Union is determined to play its role together with the parties, the countries in the region, the United States, the United Nations and Russia in the pursuit of a solution, on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002) and the principles of the Madrid Conference, Oslo and subsequent agreements, which would allow two States, Israel and Palestine, to live in peace and security and play their full part in the region. The High Representative, Javier Solana, will continue his regular consultations with all international actors involved.

9. On the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the overall objective is two-fold: the creation of a democratic, viable and independent State of Palestine, bringing to an end the occupation of 1967, and the right of Israel to live within safe and secure boundaries, guaranteed by the commitment of the international community, and in particular the Arab countries.

10. The European Council welcomes the recent initiative of Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, which is based on the concept of full normalization and full withdrawal in accordance with United Nations resolutions, and offers a unique opportunity to be seized in the interest of a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It looks to the forthcoming summit of the Arab League in Beirut to take this forward and to the Government and people of Israel to respond positively.

11. The European Council recognizes and praises those who continue to work tirelessly for peace within the peace camps of Israeli and Palestinian society and supports the direct contacts and dialogue that both parties are conducting.

12. Following on its present effort, the European Union will make a full and substantial economic contribution to peace-building in the region, with the aim of improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people, of consolidating and supporting the Palestinian Authority, of strengthening the economic basis of the future State of Palestine and of promoting development and regional economic integration. In this perspective, the European Union stands ready to contribute to the reconstruction of the Palestinian economy as an integral part of regional development.

13. The European Union remains convinced that, in order to be durable, peace in the Middle East must be comprehensive.